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INFORMATION REPORT

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REPORT NO.

COUNTRY Chile

SUBJECT Communist Activities in Coquimbo

PLACE 25X1A

ACQUIRED

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INFO.

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1. There are reportedly approximately five thousand Communists in the Province of Coquimbo in the north of Chile, whose center of activity is La Serena, the native city of President Gabriel Gonzalez Videla. Some 1500 Party members are said to work in the Juan Soldado Cement Plant in La Serena.
2. The four police officers assigned to this region to check on Communist activities allegedly are encountering serious difficulties. Although the majority of the formerly well-known Communist leaders of this province have been arrested and relegated, a new set of leaders has replaced them. The new directors hide their affiliations by being ostensibly members of the left-wing Socialist or other legal political parties. For example, Armando Tapia, the head of Communist propaganda activities in La Serena, was recently arrested and found to be in possession of quantities of Communist propaganda material. However, he was released when he showed documents indicating that he was a member of the Popular (left-wing) Socialist Party.
3. In the Province of Coquimbo there is no branch of the Chilean Pro-Peace movement or of the Comité de Solidaridad y de Defensa de las Libertades Públicas (CSDLP). However, the Communists under arrest and the families of those relegated are given aid by Father Manuel Cortes, the parish priest of La Serena, and by local leaders of the Popular Socialist, Falange, and other political parties opposing the government.
4. The newspaper La Manana, the successor of the Communist El Siglo de Coquimbo, was published in La Serena until it was closed by the authorities in late 1949. The printing equipment, which consists of one flat press, mats, and type of various sizes, is still at the disposition of the Party since it was listed as the personal property of Eulogio Iriarte, a resident of Ovalle, Coquimbo, whose Communist connections are not widely known. At present this printing equipment is stored at Calle Arturo Prat 455, La Serena, while Iriarte is arranging to rent it to Jaime Varela Chadwick, of La Serena, for a period of three years and under the following conditions:
  - a. As rent for this equipment, Varela Chadwick is to pay twenty per cent of the monthly proceeds obtained from the new pro-Falange Nacional and anti-government newspaper which he intends to publish;

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- b. Varela Chadwick is to assume the obligation of paying the 80,000 owed by the Communist Party on this equipment; and
- c. Varela Chadwick has until 1 June 1950 to start publication of the new newspaper and to begin paying rent on the equipment.

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ Comment. It is noted that Iriarte and the Communist Party do not wish to sell the newspaper equipment but prefer to rent it on an income-sharing basis.

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